**UnityPoint Health**
Methodist | Proctor

# LACTIC ACID & SEVERE SEPSIS OR SEPTIC SHOCK

## HOW IS IT USED

- The lactate test is ordered as part of an initial evaluation of a patient who is suspected of having sepsis. Typically, if the person's lactate level is above normal limits, treatment will be initiated without delay. If a person with sepsis can be diagnosed and treated promptly, their chances of recovery are significantly improved.

- Lactate levels may be ordered at intervals to help monitor hypoxia and response to treatment in a person being treated for an acute condition, such as sepsis.

- A high lactate level in the blood means that the disease or condition a person has is causing lactate to accumulate. In general, a greater increase in lactate means a greater severity of the condition.

- However, the presence of excess lactate is not diagnostic. A health practitioner must consider a person's medical history, physical examination, and the results of other diagnostic tests in order to determine the cause and to diagnose the underlying condition or disease.

- One of the criteria of diagnosing severe sepsis is an initial Lactate > 2 mmol/L.

- One of the criteria of diagnosing septic shock is an initial Lactate > = 4 mmol/L.

## TREATMENT

- Initial Lactate level measurement drawn within 3 hours of presentation of severe sepsis/septic shock.
- Repeat Lactate level measurement within 6 hours of presentation of severe sepsis/septic shock.
- Continual Lactate level measurements every 4 hours until Lactate < 2 mmol/L.

## IS THIS LACTIC ACID ORDER NEEDED

- Do not cancel a Lactic acid order without first confirming with the RN taking care of the patient.
- All orders need to be performed unless verified due to the critical nature of these patients.
- Document in Sunquest date, time and full name of RN authorizing cancellation.

## WHY WE HAVE TO COMPLY

- Our compliance will be publically reported and the Sepsis Core Measure Bundle compliance is a part of our corporate indicators, and eventually it will be part of our penalty/reimbursement from CMS.
- Also, part of our Caterpillar contract is to meet a certain compliance rate and it is an all or nothing bundle, so if we miss one indicator, we fail the entire bundle.